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# STATE OF INDIANA

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DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE



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## **School Property Tax Control Board Meeting Minutes November 4, 2004**

The monthly meeting of the School Property Tax Control Board meeting was held on November 4, 2004. The meeting was held in the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Center Room 2, 302 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204. Present for the meeting was Patty Bond, Carlyn Johnson, Chuck Nemeth, Bill Roberson, Joe Bronnert, Dave Bowen, Melissa Henson and Teresa Hemmerle, Administrative Officer.

**Minutes and Discussion:** October 7 and October 21, 2004 meeting minutes.

**MSD of Decatur Township, Marion County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$612,028. Tax rate impact is \$0.0584. The appeal was properly advertised. The appeal involves two facilities, an addition to West Newton Elementary and a new intermediate school.

At Decatur Intermediate School, officials requested approval for one maintenance person, seven custodians, one groundskeeper and one head custodian and associated benefits. Other requests include insurance and utilities. The total increase in operating costs is \$670,317. The levy request on the hearing information sheet shows \$547,352. Officials plan to occupy the facility in April 2005.

At West Newton Elementary, officials requested approval of \$64,676 for a facility that opened in August 2004. Tax rate impact is \$0.0061. The total amount of increased operating cost is \$78,777. Officials request approval of a new custodian, benefits and utilities.

**Present for the hearing** was Donald Stinson, Superintendent; Jeff Baer, Assistant Superintendent of Business; Dave Rather, Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Jack Hobbs, Consultant.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. They have been involved in a building project for over a year. The facilities in the school corporation had been ignored in the past. When he came to the district four years ago, a plan was put into place to address building needs. There were two items to be addressed through the building improvements, lack of space and facility conditions. The request includes two intermediate schools connected by common areas and an addition to West Newton Elementary. A new Stephen Decatur Elementary was constructed but is not part of the appeal since the square footage did not change. There has been overwhelming support by the community on this project. Officials are trying to improve student learning in the district. The appeal request for the intermediate school is in the amount of

\$547,352 and represents 88% of the expected annual cost. They will not be ready to staff the entire building in 2005, so they are requesting less than the full amount. The intermediate school is located on 40 acres of land on Mann Road. The facility shares the gymnasium, cafeteria, office area, media center and some computer space to reduce the costs of maintaining two separate facilities. There are two principals at the facility since they are two individual schools. The appeal also includes a request of \$64,676 for an addition to West Newton Elementary School.

Mr. Bowen asked how officials determined the 88% used to calculate the intermediate school appeal. Officials replied they would get the facility in April 2005 and would only employ the head custodian beginning in January 2005. The rest of the custodians would begin later. Mr. Bowen asked why officials did not request 75% of the costs since they would occupy the facility in April 2005. Ms. Henson explained that schools normally request for the amount of time the facility is occupied the first year, then return the following year for the remaining balance. Mr. Baer explained they would begin several custodians in March 2005 to prepare the facility for occupancy.

Ms. Henson asked what school staff would be responsible for in preparing the facility. The Superintendent said they would maintain the land and handle landscaping and putting together the furniture and furnishings for the facility. Ms. Bond noted that HVAC training was also listed in the new facility information.

Mr. Bowen asked what the annual cost increase is for the intermediate school. Mr. Hobbs said it is listed on page two of the information. It would be \$670,000 assuming everything was in place. Mr. Bowen noted that 88% of \$670,000 is \$589,600. Mr. Hobbs explained the 88% applies to the personnel costs, the appeal amount represents 81.7% of the \$670,000. Mr. Bowen asked if \$670,000 represents the annual cost increase and Mr. Hobbs replied yes.

Ms. Henson said she could not locate a page in the material that reflected the amount of the appeal. Ms. Henson asked why the actual amount requested was less than the amount of \$552,646 listed on the petition. Mr. Hobbs said they advertised higher and figures were adjusted to the adopted amount.

Ms. Bond asked for clarification of page 13 reporting of maintenance staffing. Mr. Hobbs said eleven represented the total number of positions at the facility upon completion, they are requesting only one for the appeal.

Mr. Bowen asked if the annual increase in cost at West Newton Elementary was \$78,777. Mr. Hobbs said they used numbers from the intermediate school to help estimate the cost for the elementary school. The amount of increased costs came in higher than what was advertised. Mr. Bowen asked if the request at the elementary school was for twelve months and Mr. Hobbs responded yes.

Ms. Johnson asked about the current grade configuration in the school district. The Superintendent said it is currently grades 1st-5th at the four elementary schools and they have one middle school with 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Ms. Johnson asked what the new grade configuration

would be after the completion of these projects. The Superintendent said the elementaries would be 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, the intermediate schools would be 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and the middle school would be 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The Kindergarten is a centralized program. Officials expect all students to be successful and they hope focusing on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades at the intermediate schools will help achieve this goal.

Ms. Bond asked how many students are in the early childhood program and Mr. Baer replied fifty. Ms. Bond asked if that was mainly children of employees. Mr. Baer said some were, and some from the community. Ms. Bond asked if these children received instruction during the day and the Superintendent replied yes. Ms. Bond asked what the age limit was for the pre-school program and the Superintendent said 3 years old.

Ms. Johnson asked what the charge was for this program and officials replied \$80 per week.

Mr. Roberson asked what was advertised on form 3 and Mr. Baer replied 81% figure.

**Motion:** Mr. Nemeth made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$612,028. Mr. Bowen seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation, Hancock County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$333,683 and a transportation appeal in the amount of \$84,476. The appeals were properly advertised. Tax rate impact is \$0.0550.

**Present for the hearing** was Bill Riggs, Superintendent and Mike Horton, Assistant Superintendent.

**New Facility Appeal:** Officials requested the appeal due to the opening of McCordsville Elementary School, a new facility. The facility is scheduled to open in July 2005 and the request is for ½ the operating costs of the facility. The appeal includes 3.5 custodians, one head maintenance position, one buildings and grounds position and a security position, utilities, insurance, supplies, equipment and a vehicle.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. The request is for six months of costs for McCordsville Elementary School. They continue to experience growth in their school district and expect to have 450 to 500 students at each elementary when this facility opens. The growth is occurring in the McCordsville area, which has a population of 2,900 currently and hopes to have a population of 53,000 by 2020. The new facility has been well received and McCordsville was the only community in the district without an elementary school.

Ms. Johnson asked why the growth was occurring in the area. The Superintendent said it is due to the expansion of sewer and water service in the area. Indianapolis expanded service into the area and two towns established their own utility services. There are currently nineteen housing developments under construction or planned at this time in the school district. Ms. Johnson asked about future enrollment in the school district. The Superintendent said they estimate 3,600 students by 2007-2008, possibly 4,500 to 4,800 in the future. Ms. Johnson asked if the county has a zoning ordinance. The Superintendent said yes and school officials meet periodically with local officials to explain the impact of possible growth on the school district. The

Superintendent is on a steering committee for revising the county master plan and developers must meet with him prior to seeking approval from the county to discuss the project. Ms. Johnson asked about the assessed value in the area. The Superintendent said it is increasing 7% on average. School officials are lobbying for more commercial development to help increase the assessed value in the area.

Mr. Bowen questioned one of the items listed in the request and the Superintendent said it was distance learning through SBC. Mr. Bowen asked if the charge was a rental charge and the Superintendent said it was a fee for the service.

Mr. Bronnert noted the new facility appeal is for the maintenance and operation of the building. A nurse or security person is not included in the new facility appeal. The Superintendent said they included the security position since the facility is not near other school buildings in the district. Mr. Bronnert noted the revised amount for the appeal was \$323,083.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$323,083, which removes the security position. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Transportation Appeal:** The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.000113. Officials requested the appeal due to an increase in the number of students transported. They hired four additional drivers and a transportation assistant in 2003. The number of bus routes has increased by three over the last five years. Officials note they need an addition four bus routes in 2004-2005.

**Comments:** The Assistant Superintendent spoke about the transportation appeal. Officials request an appeal in the amount of \$84,476 due to an increase in the number of students they are transporting. They are attempting to keep ahead of the increase by replacing smaller buses with 84-passenger buses. They push the limits of the capacity of the buses they currently operate. The growth that is occurring will cause the need for more bus routes.

Mr. Bowen asked how many miles they travel per year. The Assistant Superintendent was not sure, but officials will provide that information to Ms. Hemmerle.

Ms. Bond asked if the appeal amount was \$84,476 and Ms. Henson said yes.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a transportation appeal in the amount of \$84,476. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Clay Community Schools, Clay/Parke County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$38,045. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.00426. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal for an addition of 26,000 square feet to Jackson Township Elementary that opened in August 2002. Officials requested the appeal for the net increase of two hours per day for two custodians and for 15 days of pay for a third custodian that was hired and subsequently resigned. The person was not replaced due to financial concerns. The appeal request also includes utilities.

**Present for the hearing** was William Schad, Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. An elementary school was remodeled and expanded two years ago. The square footage increased from 26,000 to 52,000. There were additional classrooms added to the facility. Officials chose not to appeal until now to allow them to appeal actual cost increases.

Ms. Henson asked if the school board adopted the levy appeal at the budget adoption meeting. The Superintendent said yes, it was signed at a later date.

Mr. Bronnert asked if officials were waiting to fill the vacant custodial position for the appeal approval. The Superintendent said the position would not be filled due to financial constraints in the General fund.

**Motion:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$38,045. Mr. Bowen seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Southwest Parke Community School Corporation, Parke County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$80,453. Tax rate impact was \$0.0513. The appeal was properly advertised. The appeal is due to additions at Montezuma Elementary, Rosedale Elementary and Riverton Parke Jr./Sr. High. The total square footage added was just over 34,000 square feet. The request includes two custodians, utilities, insurance and supplies. The request is for six months of operating costs.

**Present for the hearing** was Leonard Orr, Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. He began as Superintendent June 1, 2004. The project involved additional classroom space at two elementary schools and the Jr./Sr. high school. Officials request half the increase in costs since the facilities would not be occupied until July 2005.

Ms. Henson asked if the appeal amount reflects all three facilities and the Superintendent replied yes. Ms. Henson asked if there was anything that reported the amount of the requests for each facility and the Superintendent said they could submit that information. Ms. Henson asked where the custodians would be located. The Superintendent said one at the Jr./Sr. high school and possibly split the other between the two elementary schools.

Mr. Bronnert questioned the distance between the two elementary schools. The Superintendent said 15 miles. Mr. Bronnert thought that was too far to split one person and would amount to a great deal of wasted time while being paid. The Superintendent said they might need to have a part-time position at each elementary school.

Ms. Bond asked if the appeal was properly reported on the budget form 3 and the Superintendent said yes.

**Motion:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$80,453. Mr. Roberson seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Jay School Corporation, Jay/Blackford County:** Officials requested approval of a transportation appeal in the amount of \$78,000. The appeal was properly advertised. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.01. Officials requested the appeal due to an increase in fuel costs and the number of special education students transported/miles traveled. They reported an increase of over 14% in the transportation budget.

**Present for the hearing** was Barbara Downing, Superintendent and Brad DeRome, Business Manager.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the transportation appeal. Officials request the appeal due to an increase in fuel costs and an increase in the special education transportation costs. They have a self-contained special education program and are a countywide school district.

Mr. Bowen asked about the amount of miles traveled. The Business Manager said the district is 386 square miles. Mr. Bowen asked for the amount of total miles traveled. The Business Manager said they travel round trip 3,057 miles per day for regular education students and 829 miles per day for special education students. They are the sixth largest school district in the state as far as land area. The Superintendent noted there are schools located in every corner of the county. They have seven elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school located in the center of Jay County.

Ms. Johnson asked about the enrollment at the high school and the Superintendent said 1,100.

Ms. Bond asked if the appeal amount was \$78,000 and the Superintendent said yes.

**Motion:** Mr. Roberson made a motion to approve a transportation appeal in the amount of \$78,000. Mr. Nemeth seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**MSD of Bluffton –Harrison, Wells County:** Officials requested approval of a transfer tuition appeal in the amount of \$46,525. Tax rate impact is \$0.0134. The appeal was properly advertised.

No one appeared on behalf of the school corporation.

**Comments:** Control board members discussed the transfer tuition appeal. Ms. Hemmerle said officials were not required to appear since the request included qualifying Indiana school corporations.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a transfer tuition appeal in the amount of \$24,669. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools, Dearborn/Ripley County:** Officials requested approval of a transportation appeal in the amount of \$147,725. The tax rate impact of the appeal is approximately \$0.017. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal due to an increase in the number of miles transported for students and an increase in the number of special education students transported/miles traveled. There were three bus drivers and three bus assistants hired since 2002. The number of bus routes has increased from 63 in 1999-2000 to 71 in 2003-2004. Officials requested the appeal due to the increase in the transportation budget from 2003 to 2004, which was an increase of approximately 17%.

**Present for the hearing** was Kris Wilson, Business Manager and Mary Ann Neff, Treasurer.

**Comments:** The Business Manager spoke about the transportation appeal. Officials are requesting \$147,725 and they based the appeal on the 2003 and 2004 budgets. The reasons for the appeal are the opening of a district-wide intermediate school and the expense of the four-year contracts for bus drivers. Officials request this appeal late because of the delays in the certification of their 2003 and 2004 budgets.

Ms. Bond asked if officials would return next year for the increase from 2004 to 2005. The Superintendent said no, this would address their needs.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a transportation appeal in the amount of \$147,725. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**West Clark Community Schools, Clark County:** Officials requested a transportation appeal in the amount of \$146,611. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.029. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal due to an increase in fuel costs, an increase in the number of students transported/miles traveled and an increase in the number of special education students transported/miles traveled. There have been six bus drivers added since 2001. The number of bus routes has increased from 55 in 2000-2001 to 61 in 2004-2005. Officials reported a transportation budget increase of 11.5%.

Officials also requested approval of a shortfall appeal for 2002 pay 2003 in the amount of \$100,000 transportation and \$700,000 in the general fund. Because the auditor has not completed settlement for 2003, the DLGF could not determine whether a shortfall occurred.

No one appeared on behalf of the school corporation.

**Comments:** The control board members discussed the transportation appeal. It was clarified the request was for \$146,611 and it was due to increases in fuel, the number of regular education students and special education students transported.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a transportation appeal in the amount of \$146,611 contingent upon DLGF final budget certification for 2004. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**South Spencer County School Corporation, Spencer County:** Officials requested approval of a shortfall appeal in the General fund in the amount of \$69,011 and Transportation fund in the amount of \$8,480. Tax rate impact is \$0.0111. The appeal was properly advertised. The appeal is due to an assessed value error and a subsequent refund to be repaid in four equal payments beginning with taxes due and payable in May 2003 and ending November 2004. The total refund was \$299,914.70.

**Present for the hearing** was Mike Robinson, Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the shortfall appeal. Officials request the appeal due to a refund granted to AEP Corporation. The appeal was due to the 1995 reassessment and was granted by the state. The refund amount of \$299,914 was to be paid back over four years. The state had the appeal for several years before it was resolved. This is the third and final shortfall appeal school officials will file on this refund.

Ms. Bond asked what AEP represented. The Superintendent said it was American Electric Power.

Ms. Johnson asked if this was the third year for this refund and the Superintendent said yes.

Ms. Bond noted the final shortfall amount, if any, would be determined by DLGF personnel upon receipt of the final settlement in December. Ms. Bond asked if the appeal was advertised as required on budget form 3 and the Superintendent said yes.

**Motion:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve a shortfall appeal in the total amount of \$77,491. Ms. Henson seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Hanover Community School Corporation, Lake County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$187,472. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.0455. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal due to an addition to Hanover Central Jr./Sr. High School. The appeal request includes a part-time Fitness Center Supervisor/Trainer, one scheduling and building/grounds secretary, one custodian, property services/insurance, utilities and supplies. The request has been adjusted for the amount of time the additions would be occupied in 2005.

**Present for the hearing** was Michael Livovich, Superintendent and Jeannette Bapst, Assistant to the Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. The facility will be completed in December 2005, but part of the facility will be occupied prior to that time. Officials are trying to make this facility a community center of lifelong learning. A factor of .87 was used to determine the appeal amount. The addition is to help address the increase in physical education programs.

Mr. Bowen asked if the community would be charged a fee for using the facility and school officials replied yes. School officials noted the fitness center is currently in use.



Ms. Henson asked when the facility would be occupied. Ms. Bapst said she tried to come up with a factor based on when additional space occupied. Ms. Henson said the secretarial position is not allowed in a new facility appeal. Ms. Henson felt the fitness center position seemed to be an instructional position. Ms. Bapst said the person would also clean the area and repair equipment along with some educational functions. Ms. Henson asked how much of their time would be spent in educating students and Ms. Bapst said that would be difficult to determine. The Superintendent said it is only a part-time position. Ms. Henson asked if the facility is only used for educational purposes during the day and the Superintendent replied yes.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$157,820, which excludes the secretary and field house supervisor positions. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Tri-Creek School Corporation, Lake County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$469,160 and a transportation appeal in the amount of \$20,700. The appeals were properly advertised. Tax rate impact is \$0.0560.

**Present for the hearing** was Dr. Alice Neal, Superintendent; Ray Cusic, Assistant Superintendent; Nathan Kleefisch, Director of Operations and Peter Goerges, School Attorney.

**New Facility Appeal:** Officials requested the appeal due to an addition of 144,000 square feet to the high school. The request includes three custodians, a part-time custodian, one maintenance position and a field house/auditorium manager, property services, utilities and supplies.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. Officials are in the middle of a \$50 million project at Lowell High School to be completed in December 2005. The project includes the addition of an auditorium, cafeteria, field house, media center, guidance office area and fitness center. There are students utilizing the field house area as classrooms at this time. This is the fourth if five projects in a twenty-year building plan for the school corporation. The community has been advised of new facility appeals as they have gone through each project. Officials are requesting maintenance and operating costs of the facility.

Mr. Bronnert asked for a job description of the field house /auditorium manager. The Superintendent said they would oversee the lighting in the auditorium and also be responsible for repairs in the areas. Mr. Kleefisch said they would also be responsible for scheduling the facilities and keeping them secure. Mr. Bronnert asked if the manager would also supervise the custodial staff responsible for maintaining the area. The Superintendent said there is currently a supervisor in place for the custodial staff, but the manager would probably coordinate with them in the cleaning of the area. Mr. Cusic said they had planned on two positions to manage the facility, but felt one could better handle it. Officials expect the facility to get a lot of use. The School Attorney said two competitive grants in Lake County partially paid for the lease rental of the fitness facility. The facility is meant to make physical education something to improve life-long physical fitness. The facility is large for physical education classes as well as community use.

Ms. Johnson asked if the facility was open to the public and Mr. Cusic replied yes.

Mr. Bowen asked if a fee was charged to the public for using the facility and Mr. Cusic said no. Mr. Bowen asked if the person would manage this area and school officials replied yes. Mr. Bowen said commented this area is not just for school use. Mr. Cusic said the athletic department would also handle scheduling of the facility. The School Attorney said the main use of this facility would be for physical education classes.

Ms. Bond asked if the field house would be in use all day for instruction. Mr. Cusic said it would be in use throughout the day. The facility can accommodate wrestling, gymnastics and has three basketball courts sitting side by side. He said there is no end to the competition for utilizing the space. Ms. Bond said the control board members were struggling with the field house and auditorium areas of the facility. Mr. Cusic said the areas are activity centers as well as instructional areas. The manager position is there to manage the facility and also schedule them for use. The Superintendent noted the auditorium area also has classroom space for the band and choir programs.

Ms. Henson asked if the areas are open to the public during the school day. Mr. Cusic said the fitness area could be used by the public during the day when the physical education classes are not using it. Ms. Henson felt the appeal should not be granted on an area that can be used by the public throughout the day. The School Attorney said the area would be used over 90% of the time for school use during the day. The only area available for public use is the fitness area. The purpose of this facility was to get students to use it even after school to improve physical fitness. The public tends to use the facility before and after work hours. Athletic teams use the facility immediately after the school day ends.

Mr. Bowen asked what hours the field house manager would be assigned to work. School officials said they would start in the middle of the day due to the usage of the facility with their main focus on scheduling its use. Mr. Bowen asked if the school corporation accepts responsibility for what occurs in the evening and school officials replied yes. Mr. Bowen asked when they would start using the net increase in square footage of 144,000 square feet. The Superintendent said August 2005. Mr. Bowen felt officials should only be requesting 5 months of the total annual cost increase. Mr. Cusic said the school corporation is currently heating and lighting the entire facility. Mr. Bowen said officials still have not utilized the additional square footage for it to qualify for the appeal. The School Attorney said custodians are working in some of the vacated areas. There are parts of the building occupied by contractors completing the project. The added facility will be completed first and is currently being heated and cooled. The auditorium is under construction and will be completed next fall. Mr. Kleefisch said officials would acquire areas as they are completed. The art area should be done around Christmas and the guidance office area around Thanksgiving. Mr. Bowen asked what is the area of the auditorium and Mr. Kleefisch felt it was around 25% to 30% of the additional 144,000 square feet.

Mr. Bronnert said the field house supervisor is mainly for scheduling purposes and should not be allowed. Mr. Nemeth commented how do you quantify the appeal is another question. Ms.

Bond noted there are some areas being occupied as completed, so there are increased costs being incurred. Ms. Bond asked school officials to complete the new facility hearing information sheet page and forward to Ms. Hemmerle.

Ms. Henson noted only two board members signed the appeal petition. Mr. Cusic said three had signed it and were the only members in attendance that evening.

Control board members discussed the appeal. Ms. Henson questioned looking at only five months of the appeal. Ms. Bond noted that some of the area is being occupied currently. It was suggested using a percentage of the appeal requested. The School Attorney suggested using 65% of the total request. Ms. Henson suggested 5/12 for the adjustment and said she is not considering the field house manager position.

**Motion:** Ms. Bond made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$305,000, which represents 65% of the appeal request rounded to the nearest thousand. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which carried 6-1. Ms. Henson cast the dissenting vote.

**Transportation Appeal:** The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.00242. Officials requested the appeal due to an increase in fuel costs. They reported an increase in the transportation budget of 26.7%.

**Comments:** Ms. Bond asked if the appeal amount is \$20,700 and Mr. Cusic replied yes.

School officials said they are only requesting for increased fuel costs.

Mr. Roberson asked if the fuel increase is due the cost increase or the number of miles traveled increasing. Mr. Cusic said it was due to the increase in fuel costs. Officials stated they buy their fuel in bulk.

**Motion:** Mr. Bronnert made a motion to approve a transportation appeal in the amount of \$20,700. Mr. Bowen seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**School Town of Munster, Lake County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$343,029. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.0235 based on 2002 information. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal due to an addition of 11,723 square feet to Wilbur Wright Middle School, which opened in August 2004 and the new Elliott Elementary School with 72,700 square feet, which is set to open in December 2004. The appeal request for Wilbur Wright is in the amount of \$59,320 and includes one custodial position and utility costs. The appeal request for Elliott Elementary is in the amount of \$283,709 and includes one head custodian, three custodians and utilities.

**Present for the hearing** was Richard Sopko, Assistant Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Assistant Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. The request includes an addition to Wilbur Wright Middle School and a new elementary school set to open

December 2004. The request includes an additional custodian at Wilbur Wright and utilities were calculated based on new 2004 utility rates.

Ms. Henson asked how much area a custodian is assigned and the Assistant Superintendent said 24,000 square feet.

Mr. Bronnert asked how many custodians are at Wilbur Wright Middle School and the Assistant Superintendent said two day and four night. Mr. Bronnert asked how many square feet in total is Wilbur Wright Middle School and Ms. Henson said 145,556 square feet. Mr. Bronnert asked how many custodians are at this facility and the Assistant Superintendent said four.

Mr. Bowen questioned the appeal amount being less than the projected annual cost increase. The Assistant Superintendent said the higher amount was due to the projection for utilities.

**Motion:** Mr. Bronnert made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$343,029. Mr. Nemeth seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Crothersville Community Schools, Jackson County:** Officials requested approval of a new facility appeal in the amount of \$179,556. The tax rate impact of the appeal is \$0.13. The appeal was properly advertised. Officials requested the appeal due to an addition of approximately 22,500 square feet that was occupied in January 2004. The appeal request includes salaries, property services, utilities, supplies and equipment.

**Present for the hearing** was Dr. Terry Goodin, Superintendent.

**Comments:** The Superintendent spoke about the new facility appeal. Officials have been involved in a building project over the last couple of years. They were in the building during the construction, which is the reason for the delayed appeal. Officials are requesting \$179,566, which was advertised and adopted properly.

Ms. Henson asked if the salary was for a part-time custodian. The Superintendent said yes, they were transitioning the position to full-time.

Ms. Bond asked about if they are requesting equipment costs. The Superintendent said yes, \$7,950 for a lawnmower.

Mr. Bronnert asked if the net increase in square footage was 125,141. The Superintendent said it was a net increase of 23,000 square feet. The electricity cost will increase since there was no air conditioning in the facility and an old, antiquated heating system was replaced.

Ms. Bond noted the lawnmower would be adjusted to 20% of cost since it was over \$5,000. Ms. Henson noted to revised amount for the appeal was \$173,196 and explained to the Superintendent the practice of reducing equipment items over \$5,000 to 20% of cost.

**Motion:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve a new facility appeal in the amount of \$173,196. Mr. Nemeth seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Dekalb County Central United School District, Dekalb/Steuben County:** Officials requested approval of a transfer tuition appeal in the amount of \$43,207. The appeal was properly advertised.

No one appeared on behalf of the school corporation.

**Comments:** Control board members discussed the appeal. It was noted officials were not required to appear since the list of schools were qualifying Indiana school corporations.

**Motion:** Ms. Henson made a motion to approve a transfer tuition appeal in the amount of \$43,206. Mr. Bronnert seconded the motion, which favorably carried 7-0.

**Adjournment:** There was no further business to discuss and the meeting was adjourned.